

Week Ending Friday, November 6, 1998

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the National Security
Strategy Report**

October 29, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 603 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, I am transmitting a report on the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks to the Clergy
in Jamaica, New York**

October 30, 1998

Thank you so much. Please be seated. Dr. Walker, Dr. Forbes, Reverend McCall—[laughter]—he was doing pretty good, wasn't he? Bishop Quick, Reverend Sharpton; my good friend Congressman Schumer and his wife, Iris, and their daughter, Jessica. I think Congressman Towns is here. President Fernando Ferrer, the Bronx Borough president; Virginia Fields, I think may be here, the Manhattan Borough president; Judith Hope, our State chair. I'd like to thank the St. Paul Community Baptist Church Choir for singing Red Foley's old hymn for me. Thank you very much. It was quite wonderful.

When I was a little boy, I used to listen to Mahalia Jackson sing that song. And when I was a young man and living in England, I went to the Royal Albert Hall in London to hear Mahalia Jackson sing not long before she died. It was 29 years ago, and it was an amazing thing. She was singing, "Precious

Lord." At the end of her concert, there were all these young people like me there. But most of them weren't like me, most of them were British; they didn't grow up listening to all this, you know. And these kids stormed the stage at the end, almost like she was a rock star. They were five and six deep, screaming for her to keep singing.

And you reminded me of all that just a moment ago, and I thank you for that. Weren't they wonderful? [Applause] They were great. Thank you.

Let me say to all of you, I thank Carl McCall for his leadership and for what he said. I have tried to be a friend to all Americans, without regard to race or income or religion or standing in life. I am grateful that in an economy in which we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years that the African-American poverty rate is the lowest we have ever measured. I am grateful that the tax credit that Congressman Schumer helped me pass in 1993, the earned-income tax credit, cutting the taxes of lower income working people, when put with the minimum wage, has lifted over one million African-Americans out of poverty through their own efforts of work.

I am grateful to have had the chance to double the number of small business loans to African-Americans and dramatically increase support for historically black colleges, to have had the largest number of African-Americans serving in the Cabinet in my two administrations by far than any President and 54—54—Federal judges.

I say all that to make this point—maybe not as well as Dr. Forbes did. I don't seek any credit for that. It was an honor for me to do. It was something I wanted to do. It was a desire born of the life I have lived and the people I have known and the things I have seen that I like and the things I have seen that I deplored and the potential of people too long untapped that I was determined to do what I could to lift up.